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1883

EMIGRATION TO LIBERIA.

The desire of intelligent and enterprising colored people to settle in Liberia, and the voluntary applications from mechanics, farmers, teachers, and preachers for assistance, have greatly increased and are still increasing. These changes seem to demand careful consideration.

The following report of the Standing Committee on Emigration of the American Colonization Society was prepared by the Chairman, Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Addison, and approved and ordered to be printed by the Board of Directors, January 17, 1883:

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111
The Committee on Emigration respectfully report:

That the work of the American Colonization Society grows in importance every year. The field to which its energies are consecrated is becoming more and more interesting.

Africa has suddenly become an object of attention to the world. It is to-day the cynosure of the nations. Wonderful things are happening there. Christendom is ascending its rivers, crossing its mountains, and traversing its plains. Everywhere in its sequestered fastnesses tread the feet of the engineer, the discoverer, and the merchant. The flag of some European civilization flaps in every breeze. The eyes of statesmen are on it. The heart of the Christian philanthropist beats in sympathy with its wretchedness. The foreign missionary, doomed by the poison that lurks in its treacherous air, finds a grave on its beautiful shores.

Europe is all ablaze at last with interest in Africa. Thus the way is opening for the realization of the hopes which have, for more than half a century, inspired this Society. The grand future, before which our long-tried faith has stood entranced, is now pledged to the Dark Continent. Her exiled children are longing to be there to take part in the mighty movement of

their Fatherland's regeneration. They feel that their home is not here. They can find no congenial place in this Anglo-Saxon civilization. The aspirations awakened by their freedom and their growing intelligence cannot be satisfied in their inevitable inferiority in the land of strangers. And this is no speculation of ours. We are in receipt of many communications, brought by almost every mail from different parts of the country, North, South, East, and West, in which these thoughts are expressed—communications urging, pleading, beseeching, with rude yet touching eloquence, to be relieved from the degradation of their suppressed manhood, manacled energies, and crushed hopes. We have not the time to give extracts from these letters, and this is not the place for them.

Permit us, however, to say here that one of the most enlightened and cultured men of their race has declared within a few days "that the dissatisfaction of the Negro with his condition in this country is becoming intolerable," and "that they will pour into Liberia by thousands within a few years." An irresistible necessity is forcing them.

The Rev. Dr. Henry M. Turner, Bishop of the African M. E. Church, himself a Negro, and by the duties of his high office brought into contact with large numbers of his race throughout the United States, in a recent number of the *Christian Recorder*, says: "There never was a time when the colored people were more concerned about Africa in every respect than at present. In some portions of the country it is the topic of conversation, and if a line of steamers were started from New Orleans, Mobile, Savannah, or Charleston, they would be crowded to density every trip they made to Africa. There is a general unrest and a wholesale dissatisfaction among our people in a number of sections of the land to my certain knowledge, and they sigh for conveniences to and from the Continent of Africa. Something has to be done."

Do they wish to go? Liberia waits for them, longs for them, knows that her future depends on their presence. Thus only can a great Christian colony be established there to shed the light of Christ's Gospel over the spiritual wastes of heathenism, and to penetrate the dense barbarism of ages with the benign influences of modern civilization.

Hence, as the years roll, louder and still louder are the demands upon this Society; but our resources are decreasing as our responsibilities grow. We are ready for the consummation of our great enterprise. Liberia is prepared for her destiny. The golden harvest has come. Already dawns the day of fruition for which we have prayed and toiled: and yet, alas, while hope is exulting in the tokens of victory, we are paralyzed by the inexplicable apathy of the world to the transcendent interests we have been almost frantically urging upon them. Can it be that this Christian nation will permit our grand old Society to die in the pregnant hour of its opportunity? Will the Christian conscience of America permit this flower, nurtured by the prayers and tears and gifts of the good and the great for more than half a century, to wither and perish in the very hour of its rich blooming? We ask men to consider what we have again and again pressed upon them—to consider prayerfully and earnestly, before God and Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick and dead, *that this Society is the hope of Liberia, and Liberia is the hope of Africa.*

Does a continent containing myriads of souls whose destinies for time and eternity are largely in the Providence of God, committed to our sympathies and dependent upon our help, appeal in vain to men consciously beloved by God and redeemed by Jesus Christ?

Your Committee, therefore, finally recommend that this great cause be brought before the people and pressed upon their attention with renewed zeal by every possible agency within the reach of the Society's means.

COLONIZATION ROOMS,
WASHINGTON, D. C., 1883.

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